



# EMC News

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## ***Coordinator's Report***

Hello to all the members of the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council! I want to take this opportunity to say how delighted I am to be working with the Tompkins County EMC and the Planning Department. After spending the last eight years out-of-state, I am very glad to have returned to New York. Since my arrival in Ithaca, I have spent a lot of time outdoors enjoying the natural resources and open space. I think Tompkins County has a lot to offer its citizens and plenty of reasons to promote conservation. I look forward to working with such a dedicated advocacy group.

After looking through some of Katie's files (there are so many!), it is clear that the EMC is very active on a number of issues. I apologize for the time it will take me to get up to speed on all the topics, and would appreciate any help or insight you can provide. Please feel free to contact me at any time (274-5560 or [mshakarjian@tompkins-co.org](mailto:mshakarjian@tompkins-co.org)). Looking forward to getting to know all of you!

*Submitted by Mikel Shakarjian*

## ***Environmental Review Committee Report***

Jim Hanson and Karl Heck from the Tompkins County Planning Department met with the committee to discuss the Portland Point development project, providing an introductory presentation of the history of the planning department's involvement with the project. Committee members shared their initial concerns over discrepancies and inadequacies of the project development materials, including the Environmental Assessment form. A letter will be drafted by the committee to Michael Barylski, copied to the Planning Department and others, organizing our response to the adequacy of the document and enumerating the questions raised by the material. This review is considered preliminary as the DEC has not made its determination of the adequacy, and the 30-day review clock is not ticking.

The committee discussed the state's request for comment on the Recreation Master Plan for State Forests in Region 7. Additional information was needed, and comments are due June 1st. The committee asked Herb Engman to draft a resolution for consideration by the full EMC at its May meeting.

Discussion continued on the Cornell University's Radiation Disposal Site remediation plan; as the 30-day clock is not yet ticking for this document, further action was postponed until May.

Regarding the Finger Lakes National Forest oil and gas lease proposal, the committee found that no public good would result from the sale of these leases and therefore no rights should be sold. This is particularly true since the National Forest is a much used/abused area which deserves better treatment and because fugitive materials from the proposed wells (brine, salt water, oil, etc.) could cause environmental damage.

In unfinished business, the committee agreed to send the nutrient criteria development projects letter to the DEC, with copies to other appropriate agencies; the letter had been drafted by Kristin in February.

Kristin reported on the League of Women Voters' conference on the proposed intermunicipal water and sewer systems. At that meeting Kristin had raised the question of alternatives to chlorine as the primary disinfectant in water systems, in light of the cancer-related by-product which results. Kristin will continue to research this issue as the committee felt this restructuring of the water systems was an opportunity to influence policy to produce a positive public health benefit.

*Submitted by Barbara Ebert*

## ***Unique Natural Areas Committee Report***

The UNA committee met on April 7 from 5:00 to 6:30 PM at the Planning Department. Present were Lynn Leopold, Katie Borgella, Robert Wesley, Bob Beck and Bruce Johnson. The committee discussed the following topics:

1) Most of the discussion centered around the changes Nancy and Robert are making to the UNAs. Many of the UNA boundaries are changing significantly. Some are expanding, some are being deleted and some are being combined. These revisions in the UNA boundaries are based on a critical analysis of aerial photos of the UNA sites, an additional decade's worth of studying the areas and enhanced computer mapping capabilities in the Planning Department. The UNA committee members, with perhaps the help of EMC municipal reps, anticipate working with local communities to help them understand the new boundaries.

2) John Chiment of Cornell has offered to review and help us accurately locate two UNA sites (Portland Point and Diatrene on West Hill) noted for their special geologic features.

3) We discussed changes to the UNA Inventory Introduction that would make it more concise than its

previous version, yet still provide sufficient information to guide a municipal planning board through the Inventory.

4) We discussed the value of providing a glossary of terms at end of UNA survey.

5) At the next EMC meeting, the committee will provide the full Council with a draft letter to the group that is interested in purchasing the Danby Fir Tree Swamp land.

*Submitted by Bruce Johnson*

### ***Announcements***

Invasive Plants

4-H Acres, 418 Lower Creek Road

June 30, 9:00-4:30

Biodiversity's biggest enemies are habitat destruction and non-indigenous, invasive species. You can make a difference by becoming involved in a program to monitoring and control invasive plants. This hands-on workshop will cover why invasive plants are of concern, identification of the "least wanted" plants in the Finger Lakes area and their look alikes, and control options for invasives. Monitoring procedures will be field practiced in the 4-H Acres woodlands followed by the drafting of a management plan. The workshop will provide the background information needed to plan a invasive monitoring program in a community of your choice. Open to youth and adults. Bring a bag lunch. Snacks and beverages provided. Free, but pre-register is required. Call the 4-H office, 272-2292 by June 23. Contact Sharon Anderson at 272-2292 or [ska2@cce.cornell.edu](mailto:ska2@cce.cornell.edu) for more information.

*Submitted by Sharon Anderson.*

### ***Chair's Report***

No Report Submitted

### ***Executive Committee Report***

No Report Submitted

### ***Education Committee Report***

No Report Submitted

### ***Env. Directory Update Committee Report***

No Report Submitted

### ***NESTS Committee Report***

No Report Submitted

### ***County Towers Committee Report***

No Report Submitted